



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor and Council

**FROM:** Veronica Briseño, Director,  
Economic Development Department 

**DATE:** November 21, 2019

**SUBJECT:** Response to CIUR 2186 - Resolution No. 20190808-144 regarding Red River Cultural District Enhancements

### Overview

This memorandum provides a summary of the progress the Economic Development Department (EDD) and partnering Departments have made in addressing the directives of [City Council Resolution 20190808-144](#), and supporting [City Council Resolution 20170608-033](#). *Resolution 20190808-144* directs the City Manager to use available funds from the Great Streets Program to expeditiously deliver projects described in Resolution 20170608-033. Projects include alley closure, trash receptacles, lighting, temporary art, and pedestrian mobility improvements including sidewalk redesign. Additionally costs associated with design, engineering, and project manager fees are to be included.

### Red River Cultural District

The Red River Cultural District (RRCD) is an area stretching between 6<sup>th</sup> Street and 12<sup>th</sup> Street along Red River and encompasses businesses within two blocks of Red River. RRCD is home to ten (10) live music venues, hotels and other businesses in a district essential to Austin's music industry ecosystem. The RRCD merchants association was created with the assistance of the Economic Development Department's Souly Austin program. An expansive and robust community organizing and engagement effort supported the identification of the enhancements outlined in both resolutions mentioned above. Participation among the business and property owner community in the area averaged 90% and consensus on priorities for the District are outlined in the [Red River Cultural District Economic Strategy](#). Carrying out the work outlined in the both Resolutions stems from and relies on programmatic support of the Souly Austin Program. Information about the program is available at: <http://www.austintexas.gov/soulyatx>.

### Progress to Date

EDD has convened an interdepartmental project delivery team consisting of Austin Energy, Austin Resource Recovery, Development Services, Planning and Zoning, and Public Works. The Planning and Zoning Department has committed a budget of \$1.3 million in Great Streets Funds for the projects identified. Project specific updates as well as scoping and administrative updates can be found in Matrix 1 Resolution Items, Updates and Cost Estimates. To increase transparency and communication on the items within Resolution 20190808-144, a City of Austin [webpage](#) has been created where regular updates will also be available.

Staff recommends project prioritization categories to include: Level 1 Project Prioritization inclusive of Safety and Accessibility Improvement – alley closure, lighting as deemed necessary from the study, ADA compliance, addressing absent sidewalks, installation of trash receptacles and pedestrian crosswalk restriping. Level 2 Project Prioritization inclusive of Hardscapes and Right of Way Enhancements – sidewalk repair, design and engineering for curb cuts and sidewalk redesign, and street alignment. Level 3 Project Prioritization inclusive of Beautification Projects – planter boxes, trees, and maintenance.

#### **Next Steps (90 Days)**

Within the next 90 days, staff will conduct the necessary studies, design, engineering and cost estimation for projects. A total cost estimate for the enhancements detailed in Resolution 20170608-033 will be completed, revealing what, if any, additional funding will be needed for the entirety of the work in excess of the allocated budget of \$1.3 million by PAZ. The program of work for undertaking these enhancements identified in the Council Resolution involves addressing long-term maintenance needs and funding allocations. Staff will also identify different funding and partnership sources for ongoing maintenance of the contemplated improvement as available.

Staff will report to City Council with a follow up memorandum on February 1, 2019 on progress made, recommended solutions to address any identified funding “gap” and potential solutions for ongoing maintenance. For more information please contact, Nicole Klepadlo, Redevelopment Project Manager in EDD at 512-974-7739 or [Nicole.Klepadlo@austintexas.gov](mailto:Nicole.Klepadlo@austintexas.gov).

xc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager  
Nuria Rivera-Vandermyde, Deputy City Manager  
J. Rodney Gonzales, Assistant City Manager

**Table 1: Resolution Items, Updates and Cost Estimates**

Enhancement	City Team	Actions		Resources	
		To date	Next 90 Days	Estimated Costs	Maintenance
<b>Project Scoping &amp; Administrative</b>	EDD, PW, APD, AFD, ATD, AE, AW, DSD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project team meeting</li> <li>Project manager assigned</li> <li>Design and engineering started; resources committed from PW</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completion of finalized project costs</li> <li>Attend Public Works monthly Coordination Meeting on Asset Management</li> <li>Attend Austin Utility Location Coordination Committee (AULCC)</li> <li>Engage APD on design specific to Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)</li> <li>Review IMPACT for other projects and coordination</li> <li>District Walk with project team</li> </ul>	N/A	N/A
<b>Alleyway</b>	EDD, PW, APD, AFD, ATD, AE, AW, DSD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed utility and ownership survey (\$10,000 value)</li> <li>Contractor secured through Job Order Contract</li> <li>Public Works Project Manager assigned</li> <li>Meeting with stakeholders -March 2019</li> <li>Meeting with adjacent property owners of alley occurred September 2019</li> <li>Building permit secured</li> <li>Alley paving completed</li> <li>Drainage mitigation completed</li> <li>Temporary fence/gate system installed</li> <li>Semi-permanent fence and gate system fabricated</li> <li>Fence and gate system completed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project inspection to occur 11/18 week;</li> <li>Final hardware install week of 11/25 (delayed for needed Knox Box hardware)</li> <li>Determination of maintenance costs and responsibilities.</li> </ul>	Estimated Total Cost as of 11/1/2019: \$196,000 (Construction, Inspector, Project Manager Fees, Building Permit, Site Plan, and Gate/Fence)	Long term maintenance costs and responsibility has not been determined. EDD will resume this role until a partner can be identified.
<b>Trash Receptacles</b>	EDD, ARR, PW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 cans installed throughout the District</li> <li>Secured ARR commitment for ongoing trash pickup upon installation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determination of maintenance costs and responsibilities should trash can become damaged.</li> <li>Phase 1 installation to occur. Phase one included locations where no new sidewalk design will occur.</li> <li>Coordination with other construction projects.</li> </ul>	Estimated Phase 1 Cost: \$1200 per can, \$400 per can for installation, cost for serving TBD on the total number of cans installed  Estimated Phase 2 Cost: TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintenance costs for can replacement has not been determined.</li> <li>ARR commitment to trash pickup service</li> </ul>

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<b>Lighting</b>	EDD, PW, AE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder locations identified for additional lighting.</li> <li>Street Lighting Study requested by AE (completion estimate of 2-4 weeks)</li> </ul>	Estimated completion date of study early December 2019.	AE to cover expense of Study.	Not available until Street Lighting Study is completed.
<b>Temporary Art</b> <i>Completed</i>	EDD, RRCDMA ATD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completed. Installation of three (3) murals honoring its history and culture (Elysium, Cheer Up Charlies and Stubbs)</li> </ul>	Completed.	EDD Souly Austin Program expenditures total: \$13,000  Private business contribution: \$7,500	RRCDMA businesses
<b>Sidewalks</b>	EDD, PW, ATD, UD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conducted physical condition and ADA compliance survey</li> <li>Analyzed alignment with Sidewalk Master Plan and Five Year Capital Improvements Plan</li> <li>Prioritization of sidewalk improvements into phases</li> <li>Included intersection bulb outs at district nodes</li> <li>Included completing sidewalk network</li> <li>Secured in house design commitment – meeting with design team on 10/29/2019</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refine cost estimates including design and engineering</li> <li>Explore any scheduled projects in area for leverage and coordination</li> <li>Identify current capital projects underway prior to any new construction. prior to installation of landscaping, trashcans and planters</li> </ul>	To be finalized /completed upon design and engineering completed.	Maintenance costs and frequency, responsibility and implementation have not been determined.
<b>Planter Boxes/Landscaping</b>	EDD, PW, ATD, UD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identified RRCDMA businesses to co-venture in property ROW</li> <li>Completion of draft designs based on owner input and enhancing the overall aesthetics and safety of the District</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secure support for business owner maintenance</li> <li>Secure cost estimates for external maintenance; or partner on existing maintenance contract</li> <li>Finalize cost estimates for all fabrication, installation and maintenance</li> <li>Finalize design concepts for planter box placement and materials to use</li> <li>Explore final use of adopt a median for planter box placement</li> <li>Explore tree removal and stump removal as regular maintenance</li> </ul>	To be finalized /completed upon design and engineering completed.	Maintenance costs and frequency, responsibility and implementation have not been determined.
<b>Signage and Wayfinding</b>	EDD, UD, ATD, PW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$200,000 provided through Historic Preservation Fund for Red River signage</li> <li>Multiple meetings with PW, ATD, UD to discuss parameters for signage</li> <li>Identified DRAFT locations</li> <li>Identified sign types</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approve locations</li> <li>Engineering design for specific signs</li> <li>Continue discussions about going out to bid with ATD/PW once finalized locations and graphics</li> <li>Refine graphics needed for signage</li> </ul>	\$200,000	TBD

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meetings with ATD/PW/UD on March 20, 2019, April 11, 2019, June 27, 2019 and several walks in the districts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project meeting scheduled for November 13, 2019</li> </ul>		

**Legend:**

ARR – Austin Resources Recovery Department    ATD – Austin Transportation Department    PW – Public Works Department    UD – Urban Design Division, Planning Department  
 AFD – Austin Fire Department    EDD – Economic Development Department    ROW – Right-of-way    RRCDMA – Red River Cultural District Merchants Association